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Committees
Economic Development, Small
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Health Policy

The Jacobs Report

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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For the week ending March 8, 2003

Senator Jacobs leads Senate Floor

Senator Gilda Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods) concluded a busy week at the Capitol by serving as Democratic Floor Leader on Thursday. In the longest and most contentious Senate debate of the year, there was a general consensus that Senator Jacobs served her caucus well. "My experience as Democratic Floor Leader in the House helped prepare me for this experience in the Senate," said Jacobs. "While some of the Senate rules are different, much of the parliamentary strategy remains the same. Ours is a great caucus and I am honored that my colleagues express such confidence in my ability to lead."

Governor Granholm Presents a Balanced Budget

Avoiding massive cuts to single programs, Gov. Jennifer Granholm on Thursday proposed a balanced \$38.6-billion state budget for next year by stitching a patchwork of modest cuts, higher fees, tax changes and bookkeeping maneuvers. Remarkably, under the Granholm budget, the state will be able to close a projected \$1.9-billion deficit. "The budget Governor Granholm presented today is balanced," said Senator Jacobs. "The general fund deficit was projected at almost \$2 billion, and she successfully wiped it out. And she wiped it out without raising taxes. I'm impressed. She eliminated \$1.1 billion of spending – the largest reduction in Michigan history. And she did it while still managing to invest in the priorities that really matter: protecting our families and educating our children."

Senator Jacobs co-sponsors Water Quality Bill to Make Polluters Pay

Monday, Senate and House colleagues announced bicameral legislation to hold polluters accountable, save taxpayer dollars, and clean up Michigan waterways. Senator Jacobs co-sponsored the five-bill Senate package, which would create a water quality fund for the establishment and enforcement of new water quality standards, including charges for wastewater

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permits. Surpluses in the fund would be used to clean up contaminated waterways. "Michigan is one of only eight states that does not charge for wastewater permits," said Senator Jacobs. "Water is Michigan's most valuable natural resource and we must protect it. We need to improve our quality standards by cracking down on polluters. If we don't hold polluters accountable, then Michigan taxpayers end up footing the clean up bill, and that's not right."

More Environmental Protection

Earlier this week, Senator Jacobs also co-sponsored legislation to prohibit the disposal of batteries and fluorescent lightbulbs in landfills and municipal solid waste incinerators. "Michigan is not a dumping ground for dangerous waste," said Senator Jacobs. "The days of this state serving as an import basin for toxic landfill need to end—and the sooner this dumping ceases, the better."

Senator Jacobs Asks Local Leaders for Input

Last week, Senator Jacobs held several meetings and candid discussions with local officials, polling community leaders in her district, asking them to tell her what issues they would like the Michigan legislature to address. "The response was incredible," said Jacobs. "The issues they identified are important, not just in their own communities, but in communities all across the state."

Jacobs received over a dozen responses from mayors, village managers, city commissioners, school board members, and other civic leaders. "Our local officials are clearly very passionate about their communities and the services they provide for their citizens," remarked Jacobs. "I think it's important to involve them in the process and get their input on issues that affect them and their communities."

Some of the suggestions received by Senator Jacobs include improving urban and land use planning to strengthen older cities; making the property tax system more equitable; maintaining current levels of revenue sharing for local governments; reducing or eliminating the redundancies in educational reporting requirements; identifying best practices for educating special needs students; and, working to find better ways to fund state and federal mandates for education.

Senator Jacobs and her staff intend to review all of the suggestions and present a report to the Governor.

"Local officials are used to thinking outside the box and finding creative ways to approach problems," said Jacobs. "I'm excited to work with these folks and see what we can get done for the communities in our district."

Constituents of the 14th District may contact Senator Jacobs at (e-mail address) or toll-free at (number).

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